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and the ease of administering groups with centralized authority. 622
 If he agrees, the necessary alteration is made in the tax-registers, 643
 and the new Administrative headman is paid his annuity and is 554
 called up by the District Commissioner whenever he holds a 648
 meeting. To the District Commissioner the chiefdom is made
 up of the villages on the tax-register, and in a situation of political
 importance he calls on the headmen of those villages for decisions.
 For example, when a chief was being installed, the District Com-
 missioner called each Administrative headman forward and asked
 him whether he agreed to the succession. When the District
 Commissioner wishes to discuss any matter with a villager he
 calls forward the Administrative headman. The position of
 village headmen in the political structure becomes more effective
 after they have been recognized by Government.

I have no accurate measure of the proportion of all village 622
 headmen who are recognized by Government. From my 648
 records the percentage of Administrative village headmen out 554
 of the total of recognized village headmen is :

	No. Admin. Villages	% of Total recognized
Kawinga	160	84
Liwonde	104	71
Mposa	30	48
Chikweo	48	43
Ngokwe	21	40
Chamba	61	39

I have full records for the smaller chiefdoms, Mposa, Chikweo,
 Ngokwe and Chamba, but I know for certain that the figures
 for Kawinga and Liwonde are incomplete. My fullest and most
 reliable records are for Ngokwe and Chikweo, so that we may
 estimate roughly that less than half of the village headmen are
 Administrative village headmen.

Naturally the village headman, whose taxable population will 622
 be reduced by the granting of a new 'book', opposes this in the 554
 same way as his ancestor opposed the emigration of his village 691
 members in pre-White days. In 1947, in Jalasi's area for example,
 there was an argument hinging on this.

622 Mlima was a village headman of long standing and had been
 554 recognized as an Administrative headman. Ngwaya was a headman
 691 who had come to settle under Mlima.¹ After some years Ngwaya
 felt that because he had his own village he should be given a 'book'
 and receive money from the Government. Mlima however resisted
 the claim, saying that his 'book' had been given to him by Jalasi.
 Both went to Jalasi's court so that the difference could be resolved.
 Jalasi rejected Ngwaya's claim and upbraided him for being recalcitrant.
 Ngwaya was fined 9s. and ordered to pay £1 to Mlima in compensation.

622 A rather more complex case brings out the position of the
 554 chief, the Administration and the conflict of the prestige-giving
 643 principles of historical primacy and White recognition.

691 In 1948, an Administrative village headman, Kalonga, from
 Nyambi's area, decided to migrate down to the more fertile land
 along the banks of the Shire River. This land was in Jalasi's area,
 and it was partially occupied by a minor village headman called
 Malilo. Kalonga had already selected his site for the village when
 Malilo came up to him and told him that he was the first in that
 area and that Kalonga should have asked him to indicate a building
 site. Kalonga, on the other hand, pointed out that he was an Administrative headman and that Malilo was not, and there the matter rested. In time Kalonga, because of his official position, became better known than Malilo. Malilo was jealous of this prestige and in due course went to Jalasi and complained that Kalonga was 'getting too big for his boots'² and that he was only a Newcomer into that area. Jalasi sent for Kalonga.

At the dispute in front of the chief, Malilo reiterated his complaint. Kalonga merely pointed out that Malilo was jealous of his 'book'. Jalasi dismissed the case reminding the two headmen that it was he who was chief of the country. Shortly after this, Kalonga went to Jalasi alone and told him that Malilo had told him that he, Jalasi, was no chief because he should have taken the 'book' and given it to Malilo. Jalasi said, 'It is impossible to change over the "books" which are written by the Whites', and then sent a messenger to bring Malilo to court. When he came he denied the tale and said that as far as he knew the only reason for Kalonga's animosity could be that he had refused to give him the *subaye* greeting. Jalasi informed both headmen that they were to be independent of each other. Malilo

¹ *Kwakulipatika*—lit. one who had made himself a slave.

² *Kalikwerya*—reflexive causative of the verb *kukwela*, to climb, i.e. to cause oneself to climb or to exalt one's status.

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was to report strangers coming into his village area independently of Kalonga. Nowadays, there is much tension between the two headmen and they summon each other to court on the slightest pretext. The peace is kept only by order of Jalasi. On the whole, however, it is Kalonga who has the higher status and superior prestige. 622
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Unfortunately I have no figures to show how large a village becomes before its headman applies for Government recognition. The average number of tax-payers under village headmen who have just been granted 'books' might have provided this information, but I was unable to collect it. Formerly, they could become Administrative headmen only if they had more than 20 tax-payers under them. Nowadays, however, owing to differential fertility and the reduction in size of villages because of internal dissension, many of the Administrative villages (22 per cent) are smaller than the 20 tax-payer limit. They, however, retain their 'books'. I know that often within the Administrative villages of important headmen or chiefs, there are contained some minor villages bigger than some Administrative villages which are farther away. For example, in Chiwalo's own Administrative village, I know that the villages of Selemani, Ali Kasoka and Ntapasia are larger than many Administrative villages. It is not only the size of the village which allows a headman to apply for a 'book'. It is his relative status in the community. Men of higher rank than Selemani, Ali Kasoka and Ntapasia could probably approach Chiwalo and ask him for a 'book'. But these three are Newcomers. Selemani was a refugee from the Portuguese wars and went to live in Mlumbe area in Zomba district. He came to Chiwalo's area in about 1930. Ali Kasoka moved in about 1940. Ntapasia came about 1921. But they dare not approach Chiwalo himself to ask for a 'book'. Here Chiwalo's rôle of chief is compounded with his rôle of Administrative village headman so that they would be asking Chiwalo voluntarily to reduce the size of his Administrative village. It is only when their villages become conspicuously large that headmen may begin to force the chief's hand. They have always one sanction they can bring to bear on the chief—they can threaten to move out of his area into another chiefdom. The chief may not retain any of his subjects by force. If they express a wish to live in another chiefdom he cannot stop them. On the other hand, useful as this weapon 622
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108 The Yao Village

[60] The chief or ^{most important village headman} is usually addressed by a kinship term, either *baba* (father) or *ambule* (master or grandparent). When he is referred to, his name is not used. Village headmen are owners or wardens of villages (*aryene mis*) but only those headmen of some standing are referred to as *mwenye*.

643 Important village headmen, like the chief, are in mystical
622 danger from pollution by death. They cannot come to the hut in
554 which a corpse is lying; and they cannot eat the chicken which
761 has been brought to them by relatives of the deceased to announce
the death. Like the chief too, an important headman may be
buried in a tomb in his village and not in the graveyard.

643 But an important element in their relationship nowadays is
622 that the Administration will support the chief against a village
554 headman when it comes to a trial of strength, and that a headman
578 these days is precluded by modern conditions from setting up
chieftoms as he did in the old days. Village headmen therefore
must struggle for power against their fellows and the chief within
the modern Administrative framework. Some attempts are
made to resist the power of the chief but these are rarely successful.
The dispute between Liwonde and Ndenda illustrates this.

Ndenda was an Nguru headman, who in 1947 had 284 tax-payers under him (Liwonde, the chief, had 186 in his village). Ndenda had come into Liwonde's area before the White invasion and had surrendered with his relative Mlelemba, to Liwonde. The second Liwonde had given him both initiation rights but, unlike his relative, he did not have the right to wear a scarlet headband.

In 1938 or thereabouts, Liwonde decided to move his village site from the Shire River to its present site about half-way up the Great Rift scarp. He sent two of his young men to look for a suitable site, and to plant some mango trees there when they had found one. Ndenda heard of this and sent one of his men to take Liwonde's men into custody. He took their hoes away and then told them to go back to tell the chief they were planting in his (Ndenda's) land. In due course Liwonde moved up to his new site, and asked Ndenda why he had taken the hoes away and whether he owned the country, i.e. was the chief. Ndenda now argued that Mlelemba's ancestors had been given the rights of chieftainship over this area and that the first Mlelemba in the area had given Liwonde some elephant tusks for these rights. Liwonde replied that the chief has a right to tusks and that many had given tusks to him but were not entitled for that reason to rights of chieftainship. Liwonde handled this situation by calling a meeting of the village headmen in the area. They assembled

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and the claims of Ndenda were debated. The headmen supported Liwonde in his claim that the tusks were part of the chief's rights and that when Mlelemba had come he had come 'so get fire from the chief'. Liwonde then upbraided Ndenda for imagining that because he had so many followers he was a chief, and fined him 10s. for being insolent.

The struggle between Liwonde and Ndenda did not end however. Some years afterwards a man came to Liwonde and said that he wanted to live in his area. This man was a complete stranger and had no relatives there. Liwonde sent him to Ndenda's village. Later while living in the village, this man stole some cloth. He was arrested and Ndenda brought him to the chief saying that the chief was responsible for him. Liwonde told Ndenda that he was being insolent again and that the responsibility must rest with him because the man had married into his village. He ordered Ndenda to pay £1 to compensate the victims of the theft. This Ndenda did but in his view this was tantamount to being chased out of the chief's area. He therefore moved with his children across the boundary northwards into Jalasi's area, and told his unrelated villagers to follow him. They refused to leave Liwonde's area. He was helpless and could do nothing about it. He returned to Liwonde's area a broken man and died shortly afterwards. His eldest son took charge of the village affairs, but so far no successor has been found.

The struggle between Ndenda and Liwonde has some interesting features about it. The strength of the chief in his Government position is not as evident as it has been in other struggles, as, for example, between Jalasi and Kalonga, or between Chiwalo and Ntimbuka, in the cases I cited earlier.¹ It appears only indirectly. Ndenda did not appeal to the District Commissioner against the fine as he might have done if he had felt his position to be more secure. The case history also shows how Liwonde ranged his other important headmen, 47 per cent of whom were kinamen or co-invaders, around him against Ndenda who was neither. It shows also that Ndenda's reaction to what he felt to be an injustice, typically enough, was to emigrate and to try to injure the chief by reducing his followers. When this failed he was defeated and it was his downfall, for, like a chief, 'a headman without people is nothing'.²

¹ Pp. 86 and 96.

² *Milambo naye ngamuloko Danda ngaye milambo*: 'A chief who has no people is not a chief'—a saying frequently quoted to emphasize the dependence of the chief on his subjects.

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THE FORT JAMESON NGONI

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The Yao are mistrusted more than any other tribe, and some of the decisions taken by the courts are harsh on Yao. For example, a Yao man who was married to an Ngoni woman had, it was alleged, caught venereal disease from his wife. His wife then applied to the courts for a divorce, which was granted, together with the custody of the children. No bride-wealth had been paid in the marriage, but the husband now offered to pay in order to retain the children. This bride-wealth was refused by the woman's parents. The Yao appealed, but the judgement was upheld, and in addition he was ordered to go back to Nyasaland at once. He asked for permission to return to the woman's village in order to collect his belongings, and this was granted by the court, after first securing agreement between the couple as to the extent of his possessions, to wit, four plates and two beds. This deportation order was made despite the fact that the Yao had been living with his wife for twenty-one years. If a man of some other tribe had been involved, it is unlikely that he would have been ordered to leave the country, nor would the court have been so suspicious of his trying to take away more than his rightful share of the household possessions.

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A Yao, who had a good job in Fort Jameson, once offered 30% to the Paramount Chief when he was in the town as the legalization payment for a woman of the royal lineage whom he wished to marry. The Paramount Chief refused the money on the ground that the man was a Yao and he was not going to permit Yao to marry into the royal lineage, despite the protest of one of his lieutenants that the Yao was just a man like anyone else.

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The reason that is given for this dislike of Yao is that they are sexually very virile, due to the medicines that they possess for increasing potency. It is perhaps significant that the same is said of Indians, who are also disliked. The Yao are known among the Ngoni for their great knowledge of medicines of all kinds, and the allegation of unnatural sexual vigour may be a rationalization of the fear that the Yao may practise sorcery among the families into which they marry. Another factor that may operate is that the Yao are the only tribe in the region that the Ngoni cannot claim to have conquered.

Political Relations with Other Tribes

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Before the European conquest relations between the Ngoni and other tribes were principally those of raiders and raided. The great season for raiding was after the harvest, when the surrounding tribes